




Patrick J. Flowers
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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

3/20/13
Date

AMENDED DECISION NOTICE
Grazing Lease Extension for Robb/Ledford Wildlife Management Area

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 3
1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718
March 20, 2013

Preface

In 2009, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) approved a 3-year grazing lease within Robb/Ledford Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The WMA encompasses 17,302 acres and the total number of acres involved in the grazing lease is 32,378. Authorization of this lease provides the lessee an area for grazing their cattle and FWP a management tool to enhance the availability and palatability of forage and/or for enhancement of vegetation vigor, benefiting elk, mule deer, antelope and a variety of nongame species within the WMA. The grazing lease with the Ledford Grazing Association expired on October 15, 2012. Due to current circumstances, FWP intends to extend the grazing lease for one year. The wildlife biologist position responsible for this area, a key position for administering management of the WMA, is currently vacant. Once this position is filled, the biologist will work with the lessee to review the lease arrangement, negotiate adjustments as appropriate, and assess the suitability of a longer term grazing lease.

A copy of the original decision notice for this grazing lease is available at http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/decisionNotices/pn_0627.html.

Amended Decision

FWP has reviewed the original environmental assessment completed for the grazing lease and has determined that an extension of the existing grazing lease is still within the scope of the original analysis and an appropriate action at this time. During the review of the assessment, FWP reexamined impacts to the physical and human environment including whether new information is available, and determined that no new impacts are expected and the original analysis is still valid. The environmental assessment is available at http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/decisionNotices/pn_0627.html.

Therefore, it is the decision of FWP, contingent on FWP Commission approval, to extend the grazing lease for 1 year on the Robb/Ledford WMA with the Ledford Grazing Association at this time and no new analysis is necessary.